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Director’s Message

Dear Colleagues,

Greetings. On March 13, 2012, Senator Glenn McConnell became the South Carolina Lieutenant Governor, assuming responsibility for the state Office on Aging upon the resignation of Lieutenant Governor Ard. As a former member of the South Carolina Senate, representing the 41st District since 1981, Lieutenant Governor McConnell brings to this office over thirty years of experience. The South Carolina Center for Gerontology extends a warm welcome to Lieutenant Governor McConnell.

South Carolina has 914,000 seniors, a number that will double by 2030. There are currently 8,000 seniors on the waiting list for receiving home-based services from the state Office on Aging. In addition to allowing older adults to age in place, the financial advantages of providing home-based services are also evident. Whereas it costs Medicaid $125.69 a day to house an older adult in a nursing home, home and community based services average $33.65 a day, a difference of more than $33,500 a year. Providing home and community-based services is thus a priority for the state aging services.

In addition to meeting the pressing need for home-based services, the state also faces other challenges among the aging population, including food insecurity. A recent AARP report, “Food Insecurity among Older Adults,” indicates that approximately 9 million Americans age 50+ are at risk for hunger. Hunger risk is markedly higher among residents in the South. South Carolina ranks 5th and 4th among the top 10 states with the highest rates of food insecurity among those 50-59 and among those 60+, respectively. The food insecurity rate of the state is 11.27% among those age 50-59, and 9.66% among those age 60+. This issue calls for much attention from policy makers and professionals.

Best regards,

Rita Jing-Ann Chou, PhD, MSSW
Hartford Geriatric Social Work Faculty Scholar
Meet Your Members of Congress

The 112th Congress is in the second session. Have you looked to see what leadership positions your representatives have in the 112th Congress? An easy way to look up congressional leadership is www.congress.org. At this website, you will be able to enter your address and find out information on your member of Congress. Find out if your Senator or Representative is on a key committee for aging related issues.

Long Term Care Ombudsman Program

What is a Long Term Care Ombudsman?

A Long Term Care Ombudsman serves as the advocate for residents in long term care facilities. They investigate complaints and negotiate on the residents’ behalf to resolve complaints to the residents’ satisfaction. This is the only program of its kind that is totally devoted to the concerns of facility residents.

Background and Authority

The Long Term Care Ombudsman Program is governed by the federal Older Americans Act. The South Carolina Lt. Governor’s Office on Aging administers the statewide Long Term Care Ombudsman Program through ten regional offices located throughout the state. These programs are affiliated with Area Agencies on Aging and funded with federal, as well as state and local dollars. There is no charge for services provided by the Ombudsman Program.

What Does the Long Term Care Ombudsman Do?

- Investigates and works to resolve problems or complaints affecting long term care residents.
- Identifies problem areas in long term care facilities and advocates or mediates for change.
- Provides information about long term care and related services.
- Promotes resident, family, and community involvement in long term care.
What Types of Issues Does an Ombudsman Handle?
- Educates the community about the needs of long term care residents.
- Coordinates efforts with other agencies concerned with long term care.
- Visits long term care facilities to talk to residents and monitor conditions.
- Educates residents and facility staff about residents’ rights and other issues.

Volunteer Friendly Visitor Program
Sixty percent of residents in long term care have no visitors. The Long Term Care Ombudsman Program sponsors Volunteer “Friendly Visitors” who go to facilities on a regular basis from two to four hours weekly, greet and visit residents and help educate residents and families on residents’ rights. They ensure that residents’ needs are communicated and that the lines of communication remain open.

Friendly Visitors diminish the sense of isolation experienced by residents, especially those without family. They provide encouragement and assist the resident in achieving a sense of self-determination. They are special people who make a significant difference in the residents’ quality of life.

For advocacy, information, or assistance, please contact:
Lt. Governor’s Office on Aging
1301 Gervais St., Suite 350
Phone: 803-734-9900
1-800-868-9095
LGOA 12/2011

Recent Grants/Funding


Cornman, C. Alzheimer’s Disease Supportive Services Program. Innovation Programs to Better Serve People with Alzheimer’s Disease and Related Disorders Dementia Dialogues Training. Lt. Governor’s Office on Aging. $20,000 (2011-2012).

Donley, J. Palmetto Health Physical Rehabilitation and Mobility Clinic In November 2008, Palmetto Health Division of Geriatrics received a grant for a combined project total of $1.8M to build a Comprehensive Geriatric Mobility Assessment Clinic for community-dwelling elderly serving Columbia, South Carolina seniors. The clinic is a multi-disciplinary team from the fields of geriatric medicine, physical therapy, nursing, exercise science, and social work. 2008-2012. Older Adults: the SeniorSMART Center. SC Commission on Higher. $10,000,000. (2007-2011).

Dye, C. (PI). & Hirth, V. (Subcontract). (Clemson University). “Palmetto State Geriatric Education Center”. Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) through USC subcontract, subcontract of approximately $25,000 per year. Funded. The Institute for Engaged Aging will collaborate with Greenville Hospital System, USC School of Medicine and MUSC Center on Aging to improve the training of health professionals in geriatrics, develop and disseminate curricula relating to the treatment of the health problems of elderly individuals, support the training and retraining of faculty to provide instruction in geriatrics and support continuing education of practicing health professionals. I have also developed and implemented a health literacy training for undergraduate pre-professional students and assisted in surveying programs in PT, OT, Social Work, Public Health, Nursing, and Medicine across the state which offer clinical experiences in geriatrics.
Recent Grants cont. from pg. 3


Gajadhar, R. Geriatric Academic Career Award DHHS, Health Resources and Services Administration (9/2010-9/2015).


Hirth, V.A., Dye, C., Stewart, T., Wieland, D., & Dever-Bumba, M., Palmetto State Geriatric Education Center. HRSA, $2,050,000. (07/10–06/15).


Recent Grants cont. from pg. 5

Pham, H. (PI). Division of Geriatrics and Palliative Medicine, Greenville Hospital System. The Memory Health Program, focusing on support for the caregiver of the patient with dementia in the areas of education, increased access to resources, advanced planning, and collaborative care model development utilizing interdisciplinary team. Duke Endowment (July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2013).

Pham, H. (PI). Division of Geriatrics and Palliative Medicine, Greenville Hospital System. The Community Education, focusing on enhancing community education for both care-givers and primary care physicians; facilitating care-giver library-books and DVD’s; and encouraging early selection by PCP education and tools for screening. Duke Endowment (July 1, 2011- July 30, 2013).

Porth, J. (Palmetto Health). Implementing a Care Coordination Model for Older Adults within an Accountable Care Organization. Practice Change Fellows Program. $90,000 (9/1/10-8/31/12).


Presentations

Amella, E. J. Falls - a “Never Event”. Strengthening outcomes in Older Adults: Nurses as a vital link between nutrition and sustained recovery. Abbott Nutrition Health Institute, Columbus, OH, (September, 2011) and San Francisco, CA (November, 2011).


Chou, R. J. Symposium. “Filial piety, elder support, and social policy: views from four Asian societies,” the 64th Annual Scientific Meeting of the Gerontological Society of America, Boston, MA (November, 2011).

Presentations

**Hirth, V.** SmartHOME Fall Falls Detection: Birmingham, AL (February 25, 2011).

**Hirth, V.** Best Practices Featuring Active Community Based Programs: San Francisco, CA (April 27, 2011).

**Hirth, V.** A New View for Enhancing Recruitment into Medical Genetics: Kiawah Island Resort, SC (May 4, 2011).

**Hirth, V.** Technology Trends in Alzheimer’s Treatment: Wayne State University 23rd Annual Gerontology Symposium Dearborn, MI (May 9, 2011).


**Mintzer, J.** (MUSC). “Who Decides…the Patient, the Physician, or the Rabbi?” Charleston, SC (September 9, 2011).

**Mintzer, J.** (MUSC). “Alzheimer’s disease: what we have learned in the last year and where we are going”. Charleston, SC (October 7, 2011).


Presentations cont. from pg. 5


Mintzer, J. (MUSC). “Alzheimer’s disease: what we have learned in the last year and where we are going”. Charleston, SC (October 7, 2011).


Recent Publications


Publications cont. from pg 9


Other Aging News

Award
March 28, 2012 Goodwill Industries recognized The Office for the Study of Aging as Partners in the Power of Work. The Office for the Study of Aging developed a pilot program to mentor Certified Nurse Aides by matching them with mentors and working with employers to provide additional training on healthcare topics (Lunch & Learn Chronic Disease Management).

Other News
The Institute for Engaged Aging at Clemson University partnered with the Division of Geriatrics at the Greenville Hospital system, University Medical Center to host the 8th Annual Aging Research Day on March 9, 2012. Sponsors included Palmetto Health, University of South Carolina, Palmetto State Geriatric Education Center, MUSC, White Oak Management, Inc., and the South Carolina Hospital Association. 130 people were registered for the event which included presenters on topics ranging from brain, cardiovascular and eye health to optimal ways for engaging older adults with technology.

Organization Profile

Senior Resources

Senior Resources is a non-profit organization that provides coordinated services, resources and personal choices to promote healthy, independent living through the support of staff and volunteers. Since 1967, Senior Resources has provided a variety of choices to Columbia area seniors and families by offering programs for services. The services programs of Senior Resources touch over 4,000 lives a day in the Midlands of South Carolina. Senior Resources is a non-profit 501(c) 3 operating under the auspices of a Board of Directors comprised of local community leaders. The current programs provided by the Senior Resources include Foster Grandparent Program, Home Care, Meals on Wheels, RSVP (Retired & Senior Volunteer Program), Senior Companions, Transportation, Wellness Center Programs and information & referral services. The following is a detailed description of two of those programs.

Senior Companions and Foster Grandparents are income-eligible volunteers (under 200% of Federal Poverty Guidelines), age 55 and older. Primarily funded federally by the Corporation for National and Community Service, other matching financial support comes from Richland County, volunteer stations, and individual contributors. The program partners with 40 community agencies as volunteer stations and serve Richland and Lexington Counties.
Companions assist chronically impaired older adults, including veterans, patients with dementia, those who are blind and deaf, men and women recuperating from major surgery, as well as those who are simply older adults with frailties. These volunteers provide socialization, prepare light meals, and perform light household management tasks that their clients may need assistance with. The Senior Companions also provide much needed respite opportunities to family caregivers, who may need to just get away from the responsibilities of care-giving for a short period of time to go on their own errands or medical appointments or to take a much-needed break.

Foster Grandparents share their talents, knowledge, and life experiences and serve as tutors, mentors, care givers, and friends to children with special and exceptional needs. The children they serve have a variety of obstacles such as medically fragile, emotionally disabled, learning disabled, developmental delays, behavioral issues, homelessness and/or difficult living and family situations. This intergenerational program improves the lives of the children being served while profoundly enriching the lives of the senior volunteers.

Volunteers serve twenty hours per week and go through intensive pre-service training as well as monthly in-service training. Among the benefits of participation in the program, volunteers receive a small tax-free stipend ($2.65/hour), travel reimbursement ($.25/mile), and an annual physical, and on-going recognition for their service. The volunteers share their compassion, kindness, time, and talents with their peers so that they can enhance their lives while providing an essential service. More information about

Senior Resources can be found at http://www.seniorresourcesinc.org/index.html.